

Frequently Asked Questions

How did you get my name?

The United States District Court currently obtains the names of its jurors solely from the voter registration lists for all of the counties located in the district. Names are drawn every four years in the year following the presidential election.

This courthouse sure is a long way from where I live. Have you made a mistake?

Your summons is from the U. S. District Court, commonly referred to as federal court. The Northern District of Alabama consists of the following counties: Blount, Bibb, Calhoun, Cherokee, Clay, Cleburne, Colbert, Cullman, DeKalb, Etowah, Fayette, Franklin, Greene, Jackson, Jefferson, Lamar, Lauderdale, Lawrence, Limestone, Madison, Marion, Marshall, Morgan, Pickens, St. Clair, Shelby, Sumter, Talladega, Tuscaloosa, Walker & Winston. If you no longer reside within our jurisdiction, please call our toll free number 1-800-222-8715.

What do I do with this juror information form at the bottom of my summons?

Please fill it out completely and return it to us as quickly as possible in the postage paid, self-addressed envelope that was provided. Do not forget to put your telephone number(s) on the form. We may need to contact you prior to your reporting date.

I need to ask to be deferred/excused due to hardship. What should I say in my note asking to be deferred?

All excuses/deferrals must be in writing. You need to write out the reason(s) it would be a hardship to serve at the time you were summoned. Please include your summons group number and a daytime phone number somewhere on your request for deferment and mail to the Jury Section, U. S. District Court, 1729 5th Avenue North, Birmingham, Alabama, 35203. A self-addressed, postage paid envelope was also included with your summons that you may use for your excuse.

How will I know I have been deferred?

We mail a letter to your home address. You should receive the letter within two business days prior to your reporting date. If you have not received this letter within the aforementioned time frame, call us on the toll free number 1-800-222-8715.

May I send my juror information card and/or request for deferral by fax?

Yes. In fact, you may wish to send by fax and follow-up by mail utilizing the self-addressed, postage paid envelope that was provided. The fax number is 278-1771. If you are calling outside the Birmingham area, the area code is 205.

Do I need to complete my juror information form and send to you even if I am asking to be deferred/excused?

No, however, it is helpful for us to have the form.

I live so far away. Will you pay me if I come the day before?

If the travel distance would make it difficult for you to be here on time, you may come the day before. We will pay you as stated in the welcome letter that was included with this summons.

How long is my term of service?

Your term of service depends on whether you are a petit (trial) juror or a grand juror. The term of service for a petit juror is approximately 2 weeks. If a trial on which you are serving runs past the end of your term, you are required to complete your service for that trial.

Grand jurors may serve for 6 months or longer with no maximum number of times to report. In most instances, you will be required to report once a month for a few days until your term has expired.

When I have completed my service as a juror, will I be called to serve again?

The court's pool of juror names is replenished every 4 years; it is unlikely that you would be in the pool a second time.

Does my employer have to let me off for jury duty?

Under federal law, employers must allow their employees time off for jury duty. An employee cannot be punished by his or her employer in any way for serving as a juror.

Does my employer have to pay me or at least make up the difference when I serve on a jury?

Under Alabama Code 12-16-8 (b) provides, in part, as follows:

“...any full-time employee shall be entitled to his usual compensation received from such employment less the fee or compensation he received for serving as such juror.”

How much are jurors paid?

The attendance fee is \$40.00 per day; travel is reimbursed at a rate of 36 cents a mile.

Employers may deduct the attendance fee from your pay or they may ask you to write them a personal check. Employers are not entitled to receive your mileage or subsistence pay.

How will I receive payment for jury service?

Jury checks are mailed to your home address.